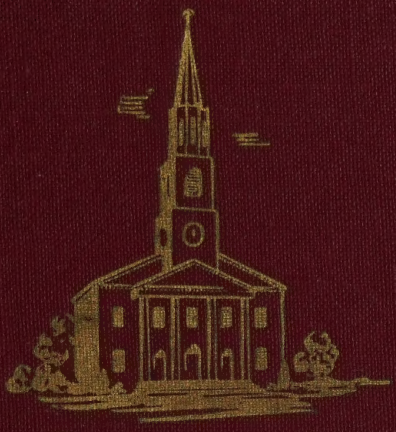

A Free Church In a Free State

— AMERICA'S UNIQUE CONTRIBUTION

FRANK J. KLINGBERG

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A FREE CHURCH IN A FREE STATE

– America's Unique Contribution

By

FRANK J. KLINGBERG

Professor of History,
University of California, Los Angeles

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Preface

RELIGION, as a way of life, is the most profound influence in human experience. It imbues plain men with greatness. It endows great men with courage and purpose. And through men's lives the power of the spirit becomes for the nation a foundation and a force for progress.

In the development and preservation of the basic institutions of a free and liberty-loving America, the spiritual power of religion has always played a fundamental part. Free to worship after the dictates of their own consciences, men have woven into the fabric of the republic the dignity and honor or righteousness. The influence of religion in developing the American polity is measured by this series.

The National Foundation for Education in American Citizenship has arranged the Fundamental American Principles Series on Religion to portray for every citizen the contributions of religion to our way of life. Each essay is written by a distinguished authority. The Foundation is a nonpartisan, nonsectarian public trust, and views expressed, as in each of its publications, are those of the author and are not to be interpreted necessarily as views of the Foundation's board or officers.

Topics in the series indicate the breadth and depth of religious influences:

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of California, Los Angeles

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Editors of the series are Frank J. Klingberg, Professor of History, University of California, Los Angeles, and Franklin L. Burdette, Professor of Government and Politics, University of Maryland.

These authoritative summaries show vividly the fundamental relationship between religious faith and basic American principles. The historic role of the churches, the American churches in action, and the role of a nation imbued on the whole with Christian religious standards are treated with understanding and vision.

—Samuel R. Harrell

Chairman, Board of Trustees
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A Free Church in a Free State:

AMERICA'S UNIQUE CONTRIBUTION

Have They not Liberty and Property and the Free Exercise of Their Religion? — Commissary Gideon Johnston of South Carolina, in 1710.

I.

SELF-RELIANCE IN THE BEGINNING

WHENCE derived the free spirit of the American way of life? Did it come from the wide open spaces, as was the thesis of Frederick Jackson Turner? Was it the political conviction of those who executed Charles I? Or was it inherent in the common temper of the entire body of all the emigrant groups which joined in the early building of America?

Edmund Burke's classic phrase stated that "Religion, always a principle of energy, in this new people . . . is also one main cause of this free spirit. The people are protestants; and of that kind which is the most adverse to all implicit submission of mind and opinion . . . the

dissenting interests have sprung up in direct opposition only . . . on a strong claim to natural liberty. Their very existence depended on the powerful and unremitted assertion of that claim." [1] Burke warned that the contentious spirit of the colonists would lead them, if necessary, to seek freedom in the "Sarahas" of the west. This view is substantiated by an examination of the motives which brought all the various stocks from their several mother countries to set up a new way of living together.

America was founded by men from the self-governing churches. Authority was centered in the people themselves and did not spring from a bishop or other official representing an institution or ecclesiastical body. The greatest single religious force in colonial America was Calvinism. Calvin not only set forth a creed but outlined a system of lay government. The Church members elected the elders and deacons, the elders chose the minister and could depose him for any reason, whether because of doctrine or dullness or desire for rotation. In addition to having complete control of an individual congregation, the Presbyterian Calvinist carried out the idea of representative government in provincial or na-

[1] *The Works of the Right Honourable Edmund Burke* (new edition, London, 1826), Vol. III, p. 52.

tional synods, the members of which were elected and legislated for the Church.[2]

The major groups of Calvinists who came to America are well known. They were the Puritans, who founded New England and whose descendants for a number of generations, it has been estimated, formed one-third of the American population; the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, who in the first three-quarters of the eighteenth century came over in such large numbers that their population in Ireland was reduced by a number computed at one-half. A show of hands in any normal American audience will reveal that half of the number have Scotch-Irish blood in their veins.[3] The Scots, direct from Scotland, while not forming so large a group as the Scotch-Irish, were also Presbyterian. The French Hugue-

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[2] For the life of John Calvin and his influence on religion and government, see Williston Walker, *John Calvin, The Organiser of Reformed Protestantism, 1509-1564* (New York, 1906), *passim*. According to Walker, "The influence of Calvinism, for more than a century after the death of the Geneva reformer, was the most potent force in western Europe in the development of civil liberty" (p. 403). For a later account see Preserved Smith, *The Age of the Reformation* (New York, 1920), pp. 160-370. He traces the influence of Calvin in a series of penetrating chapters covering Switzerland, France, the Netherlands, England, and Scotland. He discusses Calvinism in its relationship to the capitalistic revolution, and necessarily includes Lutherans and Anglicans with Calvinists in his analyses.

[3] The Scottish and Ulster backgrounds of the Scotch-Irish and their emigration during the colonial period as well as their prominent role in American life is told in Henry Jones Ford, *The Scotch-Irish in America* (Princeton, 1915), *passim*. Economic and social conditions in Ulster are discussed in Marcus Lee Hansen, *The Atlantic Migration* (Cambridge, Mass., 1940), pp. 49-50, 134-135.

nots, who are often called French-speaking Yankees or Puritans, added a steady but smaller stream to the colonies. Lastly, one of the earliest of all of the Calvinistic groups was that of the Dutch of New York, whose Dutch Reformed churches were still using the Dutch language in certain rural areas as late as the year 1900.[4]

Whatever the language, Calvinism united its adherents with its creed and its practice of self-government and elective methods of representation. Naturally this management of church affairs was transferred to political institutional life in America. Not only were these five groups numerous, but they were in each case a hardy race, self-reliant in character, capable in business, and determined upon the purpose of setting up all the institutions needed for an organized civil life. To cite an important fact, a low rate of illiteracy was to be found in the eighteenth century among the Scotch-Irish in Ireland. Schools in the Colonies were a certainty.

Turning to other major groups in America today, it may be noted that neither Lutheranism nor Catholicism furnished dominating numbers to the peopling of colonial America. The Protestant revolt did not result merely in

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[4] For the persistence of the Dutch language in America, see Marcus Lee Hansen, *The Atlantic Migration,* pp. 72-74.

the creation of two large religious groups, the Calvinists and the Lutherans, but also in the founding of many smaller religious bodies. Among these were the Baptists, the Quakers, the Mennonites, and numerous minor German and other sects, which were to be found especially in Pennsylvania and the other Middle Colonies. Such stalwart Protestants were not necessarily the contemporaries of Calvin and Luther, but have emerged from time to time in Protestant and Catholic countries. The Methodists did not appear until the eighteenth century. All these groups, large or small, were emigrants from the religious establishments of their home countries. Some sects were persecuted everywhere. The Quakers suffered appallingly in England, and refused to go underground, but always stood up to be counted.[5]

It is not necessary here to clarify the complications of religious minorities. A Scotsman at home belonged to the Presbyterian State Church, but in England he worshipped in a chapel if he was not actually discriminated against more severely. In Ireland, the Presbyterian had been sent there in the time of James I as a colonizer to

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[5] For a discussion of Protestantism in the Thirteen Colonies, see Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of the Expansion of Christianity, Three Centuries of Advance, A. D. 1500 to A. D. 1800* (New York, 1939), Vol. III, pp. 186-232.

control the Irish Roman Catholic, but in the eighteenth century he was brought under a stricter Anglican control, his economic life crippled, and his political activity limited.[6] The Roman Catholic of France drove the French Huguenot out of that country but simultaneously, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Catholic in England was one of the minority religious groups. He was eased in his situation somewhat by the founding of Maryland in 1634. Cecilius Calvert, Lord Baltimore, instructed his brother, Leonard, to erect a colony in which Protestant and Catholic might live in peace and friendship. This experiment in toleration holds a unique place in the history of English colonization. Fifteen years later toleration for Trinitarians was established by the Assembly. However, extensive religious toleration developed as late as the eighteenth century when, by parallel folk practices and national policies, England abandoned active persecution of the Catholics, and France that of the Protestants.

Lutheranism was the faith of about three-fifths of the Germans and is the faith of all of the Scandinavians: the Danes, Norwegians, Swedes, and Finns. The religious

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[6] For an Anglican protest against English policy see Dean Jonathan Swift, *The Drapier's Letters* (1724), available in numerous editions.

settlement in Germany, by the Peace of Augsburg in 1555, determined that the religion of the Prince of each state was to be the religion of his subjects. Since there were approximately 300 German states, the migration of Lutherans, if persecuted by a Catholic prince, was presumably to an adjoining Lutheran state rather than to the New World, or vice versa. However, the constant confusion in Germany sent Lutherans to the East, including Russia and the Balkans.

Dutch Lutherans moved to the Hudson: Swedes, Norwegians, Danes, and Finns to the Delaware; and the Germans went in fairly large numbers not only to Pennsylvania, but to most of the other colonies. It has been estimated that of about two and one-half million colonists in 1775, one-tenth were Germans, and that one-half of these were Lutherans. Henry Melchior Mühlenberg was sent over in 1742 to organize the Lutherans of the colonies.[7] There is an interesting speculation about the fate of the German language in the Thirteen Colonies. If all the Germans had made either a Lutheran

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[7] The importance of Mühlenberg in the founding of the Lutheran Church in America is discussed in the "Introduction" of Theodore G. Tappert and John W. Doberstein (editors and translators), *The Journals of Henry Melchoir Muhlenberg* (Philadelphia, 1942), Vol. I, pp. vii-xxiv. The work is to appear in three volumes.

or a Catholic block, would their language have survived as fully as has that of the French in Quebec?

The Catholic was to be found not only in Canada and the Mississippi Valley, but in the Spanish and Portuguese areas of the New World. Geographically, his area was much larger than that of the Protestants and this fact was used as propaganda for English expansion from the time of Sir Humphrey Gilbert (1539-1583), Richard Hakluyt (1552-1616), and Sir Walter Raleigh (1552-1618) to the end of the colonial period. A denunciation of Catholicism was motivated not merely by religious hostility, but by imperial and trade interests. This propaganda so filled the literature of English colonization that the contributions of the Catholic in the Americas were minimized and caricatured. The Catholic, often presented as a supporter of the monarchial and feudal tradition of society and government, arrived in America after a bitter experience in England and Ireland and operated in a democratic way politically, the only way open to him.

During the nineteenth century, as will be discussed later, when millions of Catholic immigrants, especially from Ireland, arrived, these newcomers were devoted to their Church, which had served them as both Church and

State at home.[8] In that century, the Catholics from Ireland and from Germany, France, and Italy, came in such numbers that they built the largest single religious body in the country with a present membership of twenty-three millions. These Catholics, by experience and tradition, represented independence from the political state and even hostility towards it.

To the Irish Catholic, the state had been the instrument of persecution, had robbed him of his land, and had forced him to set up many of his educational institutions in France and in Spain. He, as the chief leader of the Catholic Church in this country, became a bulwark against totalitarianism. In addition, of course, he was a member of a great international religious organization of world-wide membership, a fact which strengthened his religious faith that all men are brothers.

A number of common characteristics, chiefly concerning the non-Anglican Protestants in the Thirteen Colonies, are notable. All of these religious groups, before crossing the Atlantic, had adapted themselves to minority positions and often to religious environments which

[8] An able study of this period is William Forbes Adams, *Ireland and Irish Emigration to the New World from 1815 to the Famine* (New Haven, 1932), *passim*. Covering the tragic famine period is the study of Michael Francis Dillon, "Irish Emigration, 1840-1855" (an unpublished Ph.D. thesis in the University of California library, Los Angeles).

were actively hostile to them. Under these conditions, they had to be self-governing, self-disciplining, self-supporting, and self-reliant. It was inevitable that in the New World these qualities would be further developed. While in theory some of the colonies had state churches, in practice such groups did not in the long run need the active support of the state in finance, organization, police protection, or ecclesiastical discipline. They had mastered all of these problems of organization before migration. These immigrants, therefore, gave America its religious character and operated without chaos or any loss of spiritual qualities. And, finally, they formed such a massive part of the population, that they were in fact an overwhelming majority.

For two centuries observers have commented on the remarkable fact that the English colonies did not develop a state church as a replica of that in England. The situation is the more astonishing because, before 1707, the date of Union between England and Scotland, colonization was English and not Scottish or Irish. It is true that after 1660 the English government abandoned the attempt to build a new England beyond the seas and welcomed the Dutchman in New York, the German Palatinate in Pennsylvania, the French Huguenot every-

where, the Scotch-Irish Presbyterian, and the Quakers. These folk settled mostly in the Middle Colonies and in the Carolinas.[9]

The Home Counties of southeastern England had furnished a large part of the population of New England, Virginia, and Maryland up to 1660. Before that date, conflict between Cavalier and Roundhead had alternately thrown out first the Puritan, then the Cavalier. After 1660, landed proprietors, like William Penn and the grantees of the Carolinas, wished settlers for their vacant lands rather than selected Anglicans ready to conform to the official creed. Owners of large acreage advertised for settlers, as did William Byrd, who, in a prospectus in German, invited "honest Switzers" whom he preferred over any English-speaking people.[10] Strangely enough, English ideas on colonial policy were clearly set forth in 1583 by Sir Humphrey Gilbert.[11] Gil-

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[9] For a brief account of conditions in England, see Frank J. Klingberg, "The Evolution of the Humanitarian Spirit in Eighteenth Century England," in *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. LXVI (July, 1942, pp. 260-278.

[10] Byrd's repeated attempts to persuade industrious Swiss to settle on his lands are described in Richmond Croom Beatty and William J. Mulloy (editors and translators), *William Byrd's Natural History of Virginia or the Newly Discovered Eden* (Richmond, 1940), pp. xix-xxviii. The German version, published in 1737, was the work of Samuel Jenner.

[11] Sir Humphrey Gilbert, "The Advantages of Colonies," in A. E. Bland, P. A. Brown, and R. H. Tawney, *English Economic History* (London, 1914), pp. 434-438.

bert argued that all people dissatisfied religiously and milling about in search of new doctrines might well be given space in the new continent. Removal would bring peace at home and prosperity to the New World.

The Revolution in 1688, which drove James II from the throne, the death in 1714 of Queen Anne, and the coming of the Hanovers were other unsettling factors in the unity of the Anglican at home. By the time of George I, when the Anglican finally became secure at home, the New World had taken definite religious shape. The growth of religious toleration at home and the spread of philosophical deism moderated any drive to force Anglicanism on the resisting colonists.

This preliminary explanation of the negative aspects of Anglicanism, which made it a minority faith in the colonies, with the probable exception of Virginia and South Carolina, must not obscure its contributions in education and in the transplantation of the major elements of English culture to the New World. The basic problem confronting Anglicans was the absence of resident bishops. The government of the American Church by the Bishop of London necessitated ordination of clergy in England, and prevented the usual confirmation by a bishop. The Anglican suffered from these major handi-

caps which did not affect the dissenter. Because of the lack of bishops, among other factors, the domination of the Anglican Church in Ireland over non-Angelicans was not repeated in the American colonies.[12]

Briefly, the administrative link in the Anglican Church was never fully forged in colonial days, but the cultural contacts were built up primarily by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (S.P.G.), organized in 1701 to represent the Church in the plantations. The Society sent a steady stream of missionaries, teachers, literature, libraries, and books to all areas of the colonies. It founded King's College, which became Columbia University, it aided William and Mary, Harvard, Yale, and other schools. It worked for the Christianization of the Indian and the Negro, and contributed constructive ideas for the improvement of conditions among them.[13] These ideas were so firmly implanted in the South that emancipation was in steady progress until reversed in the 1830's. One-ninth of the total Negro population was free before the War between the States.

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[12] Arthur Lyon Cross, *The Anglican Episcopate and the American Colonies* (New York, 1902, and Cambridge, Mass., 1924), *passim.*

[13] On the work on the S. P. G. for Indians and Negroes see Frank J. Klingberg, *Anglican Humanitarianism in Colonial New York* (Philadelphia, 1940), *passim,* and *An Appraisal of the Negro in Colonial South Carolina: A Study in Americanization* (Washington, D. C., 1941), *passim.*

The strength of the Anglican was in the quality of his leadership, and in the link bridging the old society to the new. In good part through the Anglican minority churches, the New World was heir to the riches of the old country. The fact of minority position in the Middle and Northern colonies put the Anglican on his mettle and prepared him to battle on terms of equality with the Baptist, the Quaker, and the Presbyterian. In Virginia, where the Establishment had somewhat protected him, he lost ground to the Baptists and Methodists after the dis-establishment of the Church during the Revolutionary period. In the Middle Colonies, as well as in New England, he had acquired vigor in looking after his own interests.

The Anglican, then, entered the American Revolution without having achieved an American Episcopate, and also with the additional disadvantage that the clergy of the S.P.G. had taken a special oath of allegiance to the King, and therefore they could not serve during the war years without breaking this oath. This obstacle closed most of the S.P.G. churches. Bishop William White (1748-1836), not an S.P.G. missionary, is the most famous of the men who ardently threw in their lot with the Americans. He was, therefore, in a strategic position

to help establish an Episcopate in the American Church after independence was a fact.[14]

By the close of the Revolutionary era, the Episcopal Church had accepted the principle of separation of Church and State. The S.P.G., banned from the Thirteen Colonies, withdrew with the Loyalists to Canada, and intensified its work among the Negroes of the West Indies.[15] After Independence, hostility to the Anglican disappeared, and American bishops were created to serve throughout the nation whenever the need arose.

In fact, the decades following the Peace of Paris of 1763 are as revolutionary in the field of religion and the Churches as in the reorganization of governmental institutions. The Colonies adopted self-governing constitutions after the Declaration of Independence, and the

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[14] Samuel Seabury became the first Episcopal bishop in 1784. He had been an S. P. G. missionary and was before and throughout the American Revolution a Loyalist. Denied consecration when he reached England, owing to the laws of the country, he was consecrated in 1784 by non-juring bishops of Scotland. By way of contrast, William White took the American side throughout the Revolution, prayed for the success of the Patriot cause, and was in exile from Philadelphia with the American Congress in York, Pennsylvania. He was consecrated in England in 1787 and was presiding bishop from 1796 to 1836. For an account of his life see Walter Herbert Stowe, *The Life and Letters of Bishop William White* (New York, 1937).

[15] In the Annual Sermon preached before the Society in 1783, Bishop Beilby Porteus suggested that a Negro peasantry could be created in the West Indies, and that the loss of the Thirteen Colonies would release funds "in other parts of His Majesty's dominions," where an intensified program of Negro civilization and Christianization became a major objective of the Society. See Beilby Porteus, *A Sermon Preached before the S. P. G. in St. Mary le Bow,* London, February, 1783 (Huntington Library).

national government (1787-1789) assembled the powers formerly claimed or exercised by the British government in a Home Rule Federal Government under the Constitution. The Churches, by means of the series of periodic revivals in New England, the Middle Colonies, and the South helped make the layman a full participant in the control of his own religious organizations. The citizen set up his own folk churches. The clergyman no longer belonged to a race apart. Lay preachers and lay readers appeared everywhere and led in religious revivals.

Important democratic leaders were to be found in the Baptist church. This church had a tradition of democracy going back for centuries both in England and on the continent. It had long identified itself, not with the feudal aristocracy but with the laborers and working folk. It had stood for separation of Church and State. Its spontaneity and expansive power are best seen in Virginia and North Carolina in the very years of the American Revolution. In numbers, in capacity for organization, it showed that mass man could manage his religious affairs as well as his political and economic interests. Some of the colonies, Virginia, for example, attempted to suppress the Baptists. Such efforts merely confirmed them in their long-held conviction that State

and Church should be separate, and that the freedom of worship, with its accompanying freedom of speech, assembly, and press, should be absolute: a right and not a concession. They knew by practice and from suffering in many countries that freedom is indivisible. In passing, it may be noted that the Baptists and Methodists today are the largest of the Protestant bodies, each numbering over eight million adult members.

The Presbyterians became numerous in the eighteenth century. They had the heritage of an educated ministry and a compact theological creed in Calvin's *Institutes*. These crucial assets made them leaders in education and founders of numerous colleges. They were at first satirized for their pioneer colleges, one of which became Princeton University, another Hampton-Sidney, another Washington and Lee. A Presbyterian minister, however primitive the beginnings, nevertheless expected, as did his flock, that the school, academy, or college would take permanent root. Gilbert Tennent and Samuel Davies collected sufficient funds in England and Scotland to found Nassau Hall at Princeton. Eleazar Wheelock's zest for the conversion of the Indians caused him to send agents to England who returned with £12,000, used to found Dartmouth, a Congregational College.

In building his own churches and schools in the New World, the American exhibited all the qualities of self-government necessary in the functioning of a democracy. He was quick on the trigger against any rigid authoritarianism. Assured of his freedom of action, he was open-minded and constructive and eager to bring into his American community that which he wished to import. He did not intend to break with the home civilization, but to choose from it what was of value to him. In South Carolina (1708-1716), Commissary Gideon Johnston as the official representative of the Bishop of London, learned that, before his arrival, the S.P.G. missionaries customarily met together and agreed on common procedures. After he read his parchment of authority to them, for a time they refused to meet as a body. In able complaints to the Bishop and to the S.P.G. he described how the contentious colonists, Anglicans and dissenters, would do things only of their own will. They accepted suggestions, resisted orders. In 1710 he wrote that the "true power of Electing or rejecting" a minister, a clerk, or a church warden was in the hands of the vestry and the parishioners.[16]

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[16] The Papers of Commissary Gideon Johnston show the conflict between this Anglo-Irishman and the new community. On September 20, 1708, he

The elements which united many if not all the religious bodies were, therefore, chiefly two. Firstly, they had had long experience as minorities persecuted by prince or bishop, and had developed a complete self-governing society not dependent on the favor of any reigning potentate. Secondly, the New World enabled all these groups to "write large" the script they had learned in cell and dungeon. New England was slow in adopting a program of religious toleration, fearing the ascendancy of Anglicanism from which its people had suffered under Charles I and Bishop Laud. The accession of kings such as Charles II and James II replenished their fear of Anglican or Catholic domination.

It is perhaps unnecessary to set a date after which men and institutions might properly be designated

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reported that many "of those that pretend to be Churchmen are strangely crippled in their goings between the Church and Presbytery . . . sometimes going openly with the Dissenters;" while the Dissenters themselves were "the most unreasonable in all the British Monarchy." See Commissary Gideon Johnston to [Gilbert Burnet] Bishop of Sarum, Charleston, South Carolina, September 20, 1708, in Frank J. Klingberg, *Carolina Chronicle* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1946), pp. 22, 23. In a later letter, written July 5, 1710, Johnston explained that not only does the "true power of Electing or rejecting" a minister lie with the parishioners, but, after his election the minister "has not the power to choose his own Clark, nor has he any Share in the Choice of a Church Warden, more than any other Common Parishioner. In the holding of Vestrys he is no more consider'd than any other Vestryman; nor has he a Negative, altho' the thing to be transacted be never so contrary to his Judgment, and the Common Practice in S[outh] Britain. These and poverty and diseases, and a Whimmish and Stubborn people are the encouragements a Missionary has." *Ibid.*, pp. 59, 60.

"American." The first generations suffered from the complexities of the split world. William Byrd's life and his diaries illustrate this division of interest and allegiance.[17] In the half-century before 1775, the first great crop of indigenous Americans was born. The growth of population spread settlement from small centers into a continuous block from New Hampshire to Georgia. Population became sufficient to support a sense of nationalism and independence. It is not surprising, therefore, that the churches both contributed to this new self-consciousness and reflected it. Religious leaders from Yale went South, Mühlenberg traveled throughout the Lutheran communities, the S.P.G. missionaries were replaced by regular clergy, Sir William Johnson consulted with Anglicans from New England, New York, and Pennsylvania in regard to the Christianization of the Iroquois Indians.[18] The French were driven from the North American continent in 1763, the English region was restricted in 1783, and the consequent opening of the West to settlement contributed further to the

[17] For a discussion of the "split world" as revealed in William Byrd's diaries, see the review by Frank J. Klingberg of Louis B. Wright and Marion Tinling (editors), *The Secret Diary of William Byrd of Westover, 1709-1712* (Richmond, 1941), in *The Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church,* Vol. XI (March, 1942), pp. 96-100.

[18] Sir William Johnson's support of the S. P. G. in its Indian work is described in Frank J. Klingberg, *Anglican Humanitarianism in Colonial New York* (Philadelphia, 1940), pp. 87-120.

spirit of religious independence. In Virginia itself a Baptist minister might be jailed, but in Kentucky he would be welcomed.

The general statements just made can be clarified by an examination of a particular area. South Carolina again will serve as an illustration. Commissary Gideon Johnston, a hardy Anglo-Irishman, was sent to this flourishing colony to direct all the Anglican clergy there and to establish Anglican supremacy. His voluminous reports show the birth of the American spirit with its independence, and also the role of the minister, often the sole professional man, in building the commonwealth. By 1765 all the Anglican churches in South Carolina were supported by local funds, and were under local management. Most of these rectors joined in the American Revolution.[19]

The setting up of American political institutions has been the study of scholars for two centuries. The contemporary creation of the American churches during these centuries, though equally significant, has been

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[19] For a list of the 340 missionaries sent to the Thirteen Colonies, see C. F. Pascoe, *Two Hundred Years of the S. P. G.* (London, 1901), Vol. II, pp. 849-856. In addition to the two itinerant missionaries, George Keith and John Talbot, the numbers were: South Carolina, 54; North Carolina, 33; Georgia, 13; Maryland, 5; Pennsylvania and Delaware, 47; New England, 84; New Jersey, 44; and New York, 58. Virginia had none.

neglected until recent times. The masses of scattered materials, filling and overflowing the archives of the churches, are rich mines for the study of the forces which have made America. Our forebears built the American state and the American church as two sides of the same shield. The medieval Church, after the fall of Rome, dwarfed the state. All problems fell to its care. The rise of the modern state inaugurated a terrific conflict between church and state in which the state recovered much of the power that it had in the days of Rome. These two institutions, in the migration to America and their settlement here, in time worked out the co-operative relationship of a free church in a free state. The old conflict was reduced to minor proportions. Effective civil government and ample expression for all the energy of the religious motives of man were triumphs of the new society, envied today in many lands where these old evils of the oppressive state have again arisen.

In the English-speaking world, the French Revolution (1789-1799) intensified religious feeling and religious loyalty. The more the French executed their priests, the more the English preserved their rectors and other religious leaders. This evangelical fervor spread across the Atlantic and helped prevent extreme effects of the

French Revolution in America. The idea of the Goddess of Reason, of the new calendar and a tenth day of rest, took no root here. Religious toleration, and the gradual separation of church and state in those colonies where it had been established, late in parts of New England but early in Virginia at the time of the Revolution, indicated not a loss of religious devotion, but rather a new mechanical set-up by which the people supported their churches through voluntary gifts and the lay machinery of the state through taxes. Religious enthusiasm after the Revolution, as has been stated, took the form of tremendous growth of such democratic churches as the Methodists, Baptists, Disciples of Christ, and many others.

In the transit of religious ideas note should be taken, in summary, of the fact that among Protestants a highly selective process was in operation, that the British dissenting groups, particularly the Calvinists and Baptists, French Huguenots, German Reformed (Calvinists), and religiously dissatisfied German Lutherans founded America. While the Anglican in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries represented perhaps 65% of the population of England, here he has always been, as Burke said, in the

nature of a small sect, although powerful in historic continuity. The significance of this selective process, by which all of the religious bodies came not in corresponding proportion but in radically different mixtures from the home population, meant that the democratic, self-governing religious societies took root here and helped build the American way of life.

II.

THE NATIONAL PERIOD

It may be said that on the day of British recognition of American Independence, in 1783, the religious pattern of America had been largely fixed for the next hundred years. Two religious bodies took advantage of Independence to complete their organizations in the new Republic. The first Episcopalian Bishop was Samuel Seabury of Connecticut (1784), the second, William White of Pennsylvania (1787). The first Catholic Bishop was John Carroll of Maryland (1790). Bishop Carroll foreshadowed the growth of the Catholics into the large hierarchy of cardinals, archbishops, bishops,

priests, and the great monastic orders of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. For 175 years America had been without a bishop, either Anglican or Catholic, and for approximately another forty years, up to about 1825, the Episcopalians and Catholics were in percentage relatively a small part of the American population, which was growing rapidly by means of a high birth rate, but a relatively small immigration. The Episcopalian in Virginia for a time lost ground to the democratic churches. The Baptists and Methodists all but overwhelmed him.[20]

The Protestant churches adopted similar procedures in their expansion and their Americanization programs. They were all national and not divided according to regional lines. It is, of course, obvious that some were stronger in one part of the country than in another. Some moved more quickly to new frontiers, into the Mississippi Valley, and finally to the coast. All were, therefore, a force in and a pattern of continental unification.[21]

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[20] G. MacLaren Brydon, "Diocesan Beginnings," in *Addresses Delivered at the Centennial Celebration of the Diocesan Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Virginia* (Richmond, 1929), pp. 39-56.

[21] The story of this migration has been told in Marcus Lee Hansen, *The Atlantic Migration, 1607-1860.* His work stresses the period between 1830 anl 1860, when the Irish and the Germans formed the largest bodies of immigrants.

For example, the Catholic immigration of the mid-century, primarily from Ireland and from the German population of Europe, reached hundreds of thousands per year. The expansion of the Catholic Church in the United States to take care of this great folk migration is one of the dramatic achievements of modern times. The leaders of the church early determined to make the Catholic an American and to break him away as rapidly as possible from his European national heritage. Thus the Catholic Church was one of the greatest Americanization forces of the century.

To visualize the magnitude of the growth of the Catholic Church in the United States, it is pertinent to recall that in 1790 there were about 35,000 Catholics in the country out of a population of four million, and that about half of these were in the state of Maryland, one-fourth in Pennsylvania, and the remainder scattered.[22] Today there are twenty-three million Catholics out of a population of one hundred and forty million. A significant point is that the mass migration of Catholics in the middle decades of the nineteenth century could not be taken care of by the initial corps

[22] Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of the Expansion of Christianity, The Great Century, A. D. 1800 to A. D. 1914* (New York, 1941), Vol. IV, p. 230.

in America. The immigrants, moreover, were often desperately poor, and the Protestant population might be hostile. Fortunately, the French Canadian priests were not given authority over the Americans and a Frenchman was not appointed the first bishop, as might have been logical during the decades of the French-American alliance (1778-1800). It was partly through the influence of Benjamin Franklin that, in 1784, John Carroll was appointed prefect apostolic, and, in 1790, at the request of the American Catholic clergy, he became the first Catholic Bishop of the See of Baltimore. The Carroll family had furnished both a signer of the Declaration of Independence and of the Constitution.

This wise choice did much to allay any suspicion of alien domination by France or any other foreign country. Pennsylvania, because of its religious toleration, had German and Irish Catholics, and there the first bishop was an Irishman, Michael Egan. He could preach both in German and in English. Likewise in New York the first two bishops were Irish, although French influence was powerful in many places because of the large number of emigré priests who had been driven from their homeland. In addition to Philadelphia, three other suffragan sees were created in 1808: New

York City, Boston, and Bardstown, Kentucky. Other sees were added in Richmond, Virginia, and in Charleston, South Carolina, both in 1820; in Cincinnati in 1821; and in St. Louis and New Orleans in 1826. While this growing skeleton organization took care of the population before the great immigration of the 1840's, it was necessary, even before this date, to call upon Europe for personnel and money. Both were given generously. Of the thirty-four bishops active between 1820 and 1842, thirteen were French, nine Irish, six native American, two Belgian, one English, one German, one Spanish, and one Italian.[23]

It is perhaps not generally known that France was a great center of missionary support during the nineteenth century. Activity in the United States was merely part of the world-wide work of Frenchmen. The migration of the monastic orders, old and new, occurred simultaneously with the establishment of the Catholic sees. These missionaries, both the monks and the nuns, established schools on all levels and founded seminaries for the training of an American priesthood.

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[23] Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of the Expansion of Christianity, The Great Century A. D. 1800 to A. D. 1914,* Vol. IV, pp. 233-235. See also Gerald Shaughnessy, *Has the Immigrant Kept the Faith? A Study of Immigration and Catholic Growth in the United States, 1790-1920,* (New York, 1925), *passism.*

With the Irish immigration running to the hundreds of thousands during the years of the famine, the relative strength of the French clergy declined. The Irish had the advantage of speaking the English language and of understanding their parishioners of the same stock. Of individual men of Irish origin, only John Joseph Hughes (1799-1864), the first Archbishop of New York, may be singled out. He used the pattern of Catholic activity as we know it today. He built churches, parochial schools, brought priests and nuns from Europe, and participated in all the activities of the community, standing on the side of the North in the War between the States.[24]

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries over seven million Germans arrived in the United States[25] and many of these were Catholics. They suffered from language difficulties and at first naturally wished separate German churches, as other nationals wished their own. They even urged overlapping dioceses. They succeeded

[24] Gerald Shaughnessy, *Has the Immigrant Kept the Faith? A Study of Immigration and Catholic Growth in the United States, 1790-1920, passim.*

[25] Estimating that 5,300,000 Germans came to the United States in the century before the World War in 1914, Carl Wittke adds to this figure the immigration of those groups from Switzerland, Russia, and Austria who represented a fundamentally German culture, for a total in excess of 7,000,000. See Carl Wittke, *We Who Built America* (New York, 1939), p. 187. See also Marcus Lee Hansen, *The Atlantic Migration, passim;* G. M. Stephenson, "German Immigration," in *Dictionary of American History* (New York, 1940), Vol. II, pp. 383-384.

only in getting separate churches in many communities, granted because of the language problem. Gradually German was displaced. Few German bishops were appointed, another evidence that the church was working in the direction of Americanization. It is worth observing, however, that men of German stock exerted a powerful democratic influence. They were much the largest immigrant group, represented many different religious faiths and cultural levels, settled in all regions of the United States from early colonial days, and today form an estimated one-fourth of the white population of the United States, or about thirty million.

One of the German religious leaders deserves more than passing comment. Father Isaac Thomas Hecker (1819-1888) was largely self-educated. For a number of years he was in close contact with the cultural leaders of the New England renaissance. Although of Lutheran parentage, he became a convert to Catholicism. One of the chief missionaries of the church, which he constantly presented as democratic in its teaching, he denied that Protestantism was the chief builder of democracy. In all of his writings and lectures he developed his conception of Catholic democracy. He founded The Missionary Priests of St. Paul the Apostle

and looked forward to the day when all American democrats would live under the spiritual guidance of the Catholic Church. In the words of Professor Gabriel, "He succeeded in converting an immigrant Catholic Church to New World Democracy."

According to Archbishop Ireland: "Catholics in largest numbers were Europeans, and so were their priests, many of whom— by no means all—remained in heart and mind and mode of action as alien to America as if they had never been removed from the Shannon, the Loire, or the Rhine. . . . (Hecker) girded himself with arms shaped and tempered to the American pattern. I think that it may be said that the American current, so plain in the last quarter of a century in the flow of Catholic affairs, is, largely at least, to be traced back to Father Hecker and his early co-workers. It used to be said of them in reproach that they were the 'Yankee' Catholic Church; the reproach was their praise."[26]

In the expansion westward, the churches had a common history. As in other aspects of American life, the eastern church was paid for, the new western church was in debt. All, however, belonged to the same pattern

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[26] Ralph Henry Gabriel, *The Course of American Democratic Thought* (New York, 1940), pp. 65-66.

of growth and uniformity. The East, of course, helped the West with money, missionaries, libraries, the establishment of schools and colleges, in short enriched the cultural frontier rather than impoverished it. Thus serious sectionalism between East and West was prevented. It is only necessary to remember that a pattern was found for each American institution by free selection or experiment to see that the expansion of the church was a part of the national growth. Games and sports were the same the country over; railways adopted the same gauge. Inventions and publications, patents and copyrights were products of the people's ingenuity in which the government took a protective rather than a creative interest.

In order to illustrate the Protestant effort to provide for the immigrant and his descendants, one group from two hundred now in existence may be chosen as representative of many others. The Lutherans, with a church membership today of four and one-half millions, are numerically large and in origin have come, as have the Catholics, from many lands. Throughout the period of American history, that is from the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries, they have continued to arrive. The quarter million Germans in this country in 1775 included

many Lutherans, and of course many smaller Protestant sects. The Germans, therefore, of Protestant faith were divided and were without the central authority of the Catholics and each group was destined to follow its own objectives and its own methods of adaptation to life in this country.

The German Lutherans of colonial times and the early national era became so completely Americanized that many no longer insisted upon the use of the German language and were in process of separation from their homeland. Their Americanization antedated the loss of their language, which is still used in many communities.[27] The Mühlenberg family, covering several generations, illustrates this process. The sons of Henry Melchior Mühlenberg were important in military life and politics, and a great grandson, William Augustus Muhlenberg (1796-1877), became a prominent Anglican. The consequences of this early Americanization of the colonial Germans are to be seen in the separate story of the

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[27] Ralph Wood (editor), *The Pennsylvania Germans* (Princeton, 1942). Nine authors, each writing on a special phase of the work of these Germans, have studied them in their major fields of activity, especially religion and occupations, rather than for their contributions in fields in which they had slight interest or were handicapped by language. See especially the chapters on "Journalism among the Pennsylvania Germans," and "German Literature." Albert B. Faust, *German Element in the United States . . .* (2 volumes in 1, New York, 1927) is a complete account, both historical and cultural.

seven million German immigrants who arrived between 1820 and 1914, with a sharp decline beginning in the 1890's. These nineteenth-century Germans organized new Lutheran churches such as the Missouri Synod, the Wisconsin Synod, and others as needed. The large Scandinavian migration after the mid-nineteenth century resulted, not in a union with these German Lutherans, but in the setting up of a Norwegian Synod, a Swedish Synod, and a Danish Synod. In all cases of these foreign language groups, the early determining factor was the European heritage, and the consequent establishment of their own schools, theological seminaries, charities, missions, newspapers and cultural societies. This development may be compared with the Catholic Church in Ireland where it represented the nationalism of the Irish. So here, for a generation or more, the Lutheran churches represented the culture of the homeland. The purpose, however, was not permanent separatism from the American stock but an easy transition to the American way of life.[28] The Lutheran churches, therefore, performed a role of inestimable importance, serving as

[28] See W. P. Trent, John Erskine, Stuart P. Sherman, and Carl Van Doren (editors), *The Cambridge History of American Literature* (New York, 1921), Vol. IV, pp. 572-590, for a discussion by Albert Bernhardt Faust of the literature in German in the United States.

Americanization institutions which brought about the gradual fading of European memories and the substitution of the American dream.

The older American churches, which took an active interest in the immigrant, were rewarded with a substantial increase of membership from immigrant sources. The Methodists and Baptists profited in this way. The Episcopalians, the Congregationalists, and the Unitarians took less interest and recruited few members. The Mormons, or the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, did not wait to take the immigrant by the hand at the boat, but sought him out in Europe where about seventy Mormon missionaries were active in Sweden alone in 1907.[29] The Protestant churches regarded their religious work as an Americanization process and even when at times regretting the speed with which it occurred, they fully realized from the beginning that the English language would triumph.

The nineteenth century, overshadowed by its military men and the great chasm and crisis at mid-century, is perhaps less clearly seen by the public than the eighteenth. The leading men of the eighteenth century were born between 1720 and 1750. They shaped events and

[29] Carl Wittke, *We Who Built America*, 279.

saw the century out. But the "topping" men of the nineteenth century, who were "born with independence" in the decades about 1775, reached in general the half century and departed the scene before the outburst of sectionalism into war. Their dates emphasize this coincidence: Andrew Jackson, 1767-1845; Henry Clay, 1777-1852; John C. Calhoun, 1782-1850; Daniel Webster, 1782-1852; Thomas H. Benton, 1782-1858. Those born in the first third of the nineteenth century are the men of the Civil War period.

Passing over Jackson's America to Polk's America, and to Buchanan's America, it may be recalled that under Polk (1845-1849) America's full continental size was practically reached. Added as a whole or in part were the areas now comprising Idaho, Oregon, Washington, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, Utah, Nevada, California: great domains for the churches to move into, and to incorporate into their national programs.

The end of the Mexican War and the annexation of territory brought to the front the developing sectional crisis between North and South. This rift was compromised successfully by the great adapters of the machinery of nationalism to the interests of the nation as a

whole. Daniel Webster's greatest claim to fame lies in the fact that he listened to Calhoun's plea that it was the duty of the more powerful North to protect the interests of a minority and not squeeze it out of the Union and into war. In his immortal 7th of March speech, 1850, Webster recounted the divisions of the Union which had already taken place and of these he regarded the division of the nation's churches as most ominous and alarming. The Presbyterians had divided in 1837-38, the Baptists and the Methodists in 1844, and it was to be nearly a century later before the Methodists were to be re-united. The Baptists and the Presbyterians even today have not consolidated their respective ranks. The fact of the divisions in Webster's opinion rang the alarm bell of war.

Ironic and strange is the fact that Canada cemented her union out of elements much more discordant in the heritages of religion, language, and law at the very moment that the American Civil War took place, laid the South in ruins and, through Congressional Reconstruction, produced permanent bitterness. On July 1st, 1867, the negotiations toward conciliation of the French-Canadian Catholic were brought to an end by the guarantee of his minority rights in the creation of the Dominion of Canada. The French were assured, by

constitutional guarantee of the British Parliament, of their own tongue, customs, French laws, and religious faith. In the United States compromise during the same decade failed and the harvest was nearly a million dead, as many as Great Britain lost in all her wars from Alfred to the Great War (1914-1918).

As Professor Arnold J. Toynbee has pointed out in his monumental *A Study of History,* in the eighteenth century the slave trade and slavery were regarded as evils so difficult to abolish that humanitarians rallied their forces in full strength for a century, with unremitting efforts. Industrialism did not augment the problem of emancipation except in the case of the American South. The factories of England, with their four million cotton workers, used the product of four million Negro slaves of the South. In Professor Toynbee's words, "If, in the struggle over Slavery, the working of the force of Industrialism had not been neutralized to a large extent by the counter-operation of the force of Democracy, our Western World would not have rid itself of Slavery. . . ."[30]

In the view of Professor Toynbee, warfare, in contrast with slavery, was in a period of "calm" in the

[30] Arnold J. Toynbee, *A Study of History* (Oxford, 1939), Vol. IV, p. 140.

eighteenth century between the age of religious fanaticism and its wars, and the age of intensity derived from nationalism, democracy, and industrialism and its wars.[31] In the eighteenth century, too, war was the sport of kings and was fought by professional armies. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries it received the backing both of democracy and industrialism. Democracy furnished the fervor and industrialism the weapons. Long periods of peace both before and after 1870 perhaps prevented the sustained effort against war that abolished slavery. Now that warfare has spread from the European races to the Asiatic, there is still hope among the churches that the curve to end warfare will parallel that which ended slavery, even though it be a century later.

During the nineteenth century the relationship between anti-slavery men and the advocates of international peace was close. The Quakers, New England religious leaders, Elihu Burritt, the Learned Blacksmith,[32] on this side of the ocean, and their collaborators

[31] Special studies on War and Peace range from Karl von Clausewitz, *On War* (3 Vols., 1833, and later editions) to the current works such as materials in Professor Pitirim Sorokin, *Social and Cultural Dynamics* (3 Vols., New York, 1937), and Quincy Wright, *A Study of War* (2 Vols., Chicago, 1942). Both Sorokin and Wright give surprising figures on the percentage of war years of the different European powers.

[32] For the correspondence of Elihu Burritt with American and British friends on proposals for peace, see Merle Curti, *The Learned Blacksmith* (New York, 1937), *passism*. Also, Curti, "The American Scholar in Three Wars," *Journal of the History of Ideas,* Vol. III (June, 1942), pp. 241-264.

in Britain and on the Continent called great international Congresses for six successive years from 1848. One of the most practical peace advocates of the century was William E. Gladstone (1809-1898) whose life was devoted in part to the solution of international problems by peaceful means.

In America there were five months for compromise before the War between the States—a conflict which, with mass armies, conscription, weight of metal, revolutionary strategy and tactics, produced international and long range consequences concealed from view until the Great War broke out in 1914. Buchanan, realizing the power of the churches, appointed a day of fasting and prayer on January 4, 1861.[33] The Fast Day sermons were preached in many parts of the country and eight notable ones were reprinted and given wide circulation. Several called for caution and conciliation, and were a part of the general conciliatory program of the five months between Lincoln's election and the firing on Fort Sumter. The Crittenden proposal, the Virginia Peace Convention, and other compromise measures belong to this period. One of the most interesting of the sermons

[33] For a view of Buchanan as a conciliator see Frank Wysor Klingberg, "James Buchanan and the Crisis of the Union," in *The Journal of Southern History*, Vol. IX (November, 1943), pp. 455-474.

is that of Rabbi Morris Jacob Raphall (1798-1868), preached in New York. It was a closely reasoned argument for moderation in dealing with such an old institution as slavery. His courage did not allow him to cringe before the realization that, if the constant attack upon slavery continued, civil war was inevitable.[34]

When the war occurred, ministers North and South normally supported their sections. They preached many memorial sermons and took occasion on all anniversaries, such as Thanksgiving and the Fourth of July, to produce floods of sermons. In Richmond, Virginia, in April, 1863, ninety-six ministers assembled and issued *An Address to Christians throughout the World,*[35] surveying the success of Southern arms as a manifestation of divine favor, and the progress of the Negro in Christianization as the greatest advance the race had made to that time.

The Southern leaders and soldiers were motivated by an evangelical religious conviction, a fervor probably

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[34] This able discourse on "Bible View of Slavery," in *Fast Day Sermons or The Pulpit on the State of the Country* (New York, 1861), pp. 227-246, is a sustained argument of great power asking in effect that the revolutionary tempo of change in public opinion in the North on slavery be adjusted to the reality of slavery in the South. In time the South could make the adjustments of its life without a war. Rabbi Raphall lived in England until 1849, through the British emancipation conflict of the 1830's. He preferred peaceful separation to civil war.

[35] *An Address to Christians throughout the World.* By a Convention of Ministers Assembled at Richmond, Virginia, April, 1863 (Philadelphia, 1863). The closing statement announced that there were 2,050,000 communicants in the South, of whom 500,000 were Negroes. (Huntington Library.)

more intense than that of the Revolutionary armies of 1775. This evangelicalism was undoubtedly active in only slightly lesser degree in the Northern armies as well. A corroboration of this statement as to the extent of religious conviction in the Civil War period may be found in statistics.

In 1775, there were 3,228 individual churches in the Colonies. For various reasons, formal church membership was limited to selected persons. Speculative figures are, for New England, one in five, with a smaller percentage of members elsewhere.[36] At the beginning of the nineteenth century, American religious leaders began vigorous recruiting throughout the country with a success that seems to have been uninterrupted to date, so that in 1936, membership stood at 56,000,000, or nearly one in two.[37] The Catholic roll in 1830 was 600,000; in 1860, 4,500,000. Not only did the churches recruit the native

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[36] See William W. Sweet, "Church Membership," in *The Dictionary of American History,* Vol. I, p. 372; Philip Davidson, *Propaganda and the American Revolution, 1763-1783* (Chapel Hill, 1941), p. 83; Sweet, *Religion in Colonial America* (New York, 1942), pp. 271-272, 335-336. Religious statistics, however official, are subject to error.

[37] Dr. T. F. Murphy (editor), *Religious Bodies: 1936. Selected Statistics for the United States by Denominations and Geographic Divisions* (Washington, 1941). For an excellent discussion of the Evangelical Movement in the Episcopal Church see Alexander C. Zabriskie (editor), *Angelican Evangelicalism* (Philadelphia, 1943). For a quick survey of Evangelicalism in the English churches during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and of its powerful influence on thought and politics up to about 1880, see R. C. K. Ensor, *England, 1870-1914* (Oxford, 1936) pp. 136-143. It is one of the volumes in the "Oxford History of England Series."

stock but, as outlined above, they also absorbed the immigrant. The conclusion is inevitable that, just as the national government of the United States and its subdivisions belonged to the people, so the churches were the institutions of the people which they managed and controlled and supported. The voluntary gift also seems to have been a better means for provisioning the church than the tithe in Europe or the taxes in colonial days.

It is difficult to measure the weight of deism between the years of Thomas Paine (1737-1809) and the time of Robert Ingersoll (1833-1899). The deistic tendency to see good in all religions enters into the stream of American religious and philosophical thinking. Deism, which discounted revelation, drew renewed strength from the scientific discoveries of Charles Darwin, Charles Lyell, and many others and of course changed its form with the advancement of science and of critical scholarship. Moreover the orthodox clergy usually worked out a practical reconciliation of Christianity with the new scientific conceptions and also carried on a vigorous battle with the deists, old and new. As late as 1848, the American Tract Society published an answer in German to Thomas Paine's *Age of Reason,* which had originally

appeared in English in the 1790's.[38] A small minority of German radicals circulated the European views with which the name of George Eliot is usually associated in England. Her translation of David Frederick Strauss' *Life of Jesus* (1846) is better known than her translation of Ludwig Andreas Feuerbach's *The Essence of Christianity* (1854).

In addition to Robert Ingersoll, known throughout the country as an agnostic, two other writers in the last three decades of the nineteenth century are important in this connection: Andrew D. White, who founded Cornell, and Walt Whitman. White expressed in his volume *The Warfare between Science and Theology in Christendom* (1896) the views of radicals versus conservatives in religion. Ingersoll summarized his thoughts in his "Funeral Sermon for Whitman," saying, "He was the poet of that divine democracy which gives equal rights to all the sons and daughters of men. One of the greatest lines in our literature is his. . . . He said speaking of an outcast: 'Not till the sun excludes you do I exclude

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[38] Richard Watson, *An Apology for the Bible* (1796) was translated into German by the American Tract Society and published as *Erwiederung an Paine* (New York, 1848). The widely-distributed tract of the Rev. David Nelson, *The Cause and Cure of Infidelity: Including a Notice of the Author's Unbelief and the Means of His Rescue* (New York, 1841), also published by the American Tract Society, was apparently warning against Voltaire and other French radicals of the previous century.

you!' "[39]

In brief, deism was an adaptation of the eighteenth century enlightenment, which brought intellectual leadership and critical acumen into the nineteenth-century environment. Nineteenth-century deism was committed to a social reform program.[40] Orthodox Protestantism, likewise, adopted a social program, a chief representative of which was Walter Rauschenbusch (1861-1918), the Baptist, whose books, *Christianity and the Social Crisis, Christianizing the Social Order,* and *A Theology for the Social Gospel* became the principles of many Protestant movements. He drew his inspiration from the Bible and had no use for Marxianism.[41]

The concentration of capital following the Civil War, the growth of cities, and municipal corruption combined to make the creed of Rauschenbusch acceptable. Before the Civil War, capital had been largely the product of

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[39] Quoted from Ralph Henry Gabriel, *The Course of American Democratic Thought,* p. 183.

[40] All students are deeply indebted to Professor Merle Curti for his masterly *The Growth of American Thought* (New York, 1943). On deism, the enlightenment, and the impact of science, see especially the chapters on "The Rise of Enlightenment," "The Expanding Enlightenment," "The Delimitation of Supernaturalism," and "Professionalization and Popularization of Learning." Americans were fortunate in adopting a somewhat modified form of the German university so that research and teaching were not divorced but united on one campus, where the known world of science and art is constantly recreated by the magic of scholarship and quickly added to the stream of learning. Much English research was outside the universities.

[41] Ralph Henry Gabriel, *The Course of American Democratic Thought,* pp. 324-330.

commerce. Now added to the money of the shipping magnates were the great fortunes made in steel, extraction industry like petroleum, and national transportation. The first capitalistic aristocracy was hinted at when John Jacob Astor, with a real estate fortune, gave, in 1815, the welcome-home dinner for John Quincy Adams returning from his diplomatic services abroad, ending with his contributions to the Peace of Ghent. The new masters of capital not merely amassed fortunes but turned to benevolence. They founded colleges, symphony orchestras, supported churches and missions, and medical undertakings.

When the century was at the three-quarter mark, a new America was in view. Depression and panic in 1873 and in 1893, with mass misery in the cities, alternated with boom, prosperity, and concentrated wealth. The South was heavily mortgaged to Northern capitalists. In the movement from the country to the city, the Catholic Church kept its communicants.[42] The older Protestant churches often lost their laboring population and tended to become white collar, middle class, or bourgeois institutions.

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[42] Gerald Shaughnessy, *Has the Immigrant Kept the Faith? A Study of Immigration and Catholic Growth in the United States, 1790-1920, passim.*

Protestants, in short, tended to become evangelical on arrival in the new country. They used for their base the Christianity of the first century, and largely ignored the history of the churches during the middle ages. This characteristic was true of the Germans and Scandinavians. The Germans alone, among the Lutherans, had an agnostic wing among their intellectuals. Of the churches founded in the United States, the Christians or Disciples of Christ are the largest body today.

Jews were found in the English colonies before the American Revolution and numbers of them were wealthy. They heartily supported the Revolution financially and profited from the more liberal attitude of the post-Revolutionary decades. But their numbers were small. In 1840 there were only 15,000 Jews in the United States out of a population of seventeen million. In 1880, there were nearly two hundred and fifty thousand, mostly German Jews, who in that period of forty years dominated Jewish life in this country. During the half century from 1877 to 1927, the Jewish population increased from a quarter million to over four millions, with practically all the newcomers coming from Russia or countries bordering Russia. It is worthy of note that the majority of the Jews have been within

the country less than fifty years.[43] The attempt on the life of Alexander II, in 1881, resulted, it has been said, in the addition of three million Jews to the United States. Pogroms and massacres occurred in Russia in 1881, 1882, 1903, and 1906. As with the Irish Catholics, the resident Jewish population could not take full care of the flood of immigrants which reached these shores. The new millions, therefore, remained in the larger cities of America. Yiddish was revived not only as a newspaper language but for literature and the stage. Informed leaders of the Jews, realizing the misfortune of nearly complete urbanization, the fate of no other religious group in this country, have struggled for a solution without major result. Rural dwelling roots a people in the spiritual climate of a country, and tends to create a balance between the habits and psychologies of rural and urban life. The value of the landed man has been stated many times in this country by Jefferson, Hezekiah Niles in the pages of his *Political Register,* and by others here and abroad.

A comparison of the Jews with the Irish promotes a clearer understanding of the transplantation of a people. The Irish immigrant came from the land but, arriving

[43] Carl Wittke, *We Who Built America,* pp. 328-338.

in the cities, remained in large numbers as a laborer. The poverty was so great that he was unable, without capital, to take up farming and became, in New England, an industrial worker and in the West a builder of railroads and canals. In the South he was used in dangerous swamp and drainage work or on levees until the leaders of the Church advised him not to go South. He was hired on the big slave plantations to do work for which the Negroes' lives were too valuable to be sacrificed.[44] The nature of the Irishman is that of sociability, quick human sympathy, and a generosity which often keeps him poor. It is noteworthy that, when on the land, he is a successful farmer even in comparison with his German and Scandinavian neighbors. One churchman among many, famous for his successful efforts to establish Irish farm colonies, was Archbishop Ireland. In one area in Minnesota 300,000 acres were developed. In another place a whole new community was set up, including churches, housing, with thirty acres already broken for each 160-acre farm, all to be had for

[44] See Ulrich Bonnell Phillips, *American Negro Slavery* (New York, 1918), p. 301, for an account of the prevalent use of Irish labor for perilous jobs. He quotes a Virginia planter who explained that an Irish gang was draining for him by contract because "It's dangerous work . . . and a negro's life is too valuable to be risked at it. If a negro dies, it is a considerable loss you know."

$1174, and to be paid for over a period of years.[45] There was a counter movement in the eastern cities to keep the municipal parishes full by programs of education and community efforts.

The Jews, once a pastoral people, had suffered a break in this rural heritage by living many hundreds of years in European cities, often in ghettos, often banned from agricultural pursuits. What the Irish famine was to the Irishman, the Russian expulsion was to the Jew. Besides, the Jews arrived in numbers in an age of American urbanization when Americans, too, were leaving the countryside and crowding into the cities. By way of illustration, a leader from the Jewish people could be selected for every phase of life, as, for instance, the work of Salmon O. Levinson towards the outlawry of war, resulting finally in the Kellogg Pact. Of the immense literature dealing with the contribution of Jewish people to the thought of the world, it is difficult to choose one work rather than another for the reader. A brief but able survey has been made by Paul Goodman,[46] covering the whole history of this people in all lands and from the earliest times. It is impressive

[45] Carl Wittke, *We Who Built America,* p. 153.

[46] Paul Goodman, *A History of the Jews* (London, 1911 and later editions).

that Jewish leaders not only developed their own religious conceptions but rightfully have a share in the founding of Christianity, of Mohammedanism, and of Marxianism. Goodman points out that thus they have provided the leadership of opposite faiths and concepts to their own. He finds that they are the "historic advocates for the freedom of the human conscience."

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Great Britain carried the load of Protestant missionary effort, just as France carried the comparable burden of Catholic missions. More and more of the financial burden was taken over by the United States. In recent decades, the older stock of America has not limited itself to missionary work with the native Indian, the transported Negro, and the voluntary immigrant but, beginning with the organization in 1810 of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, our people through their churches reached out to all parts of the world. Concurrently with missionary work as such should be listed famine relief to India, China, Russia, and Belgium, generosity to the victims of the Turkish oppressions, disaster relief in the case of the Italian, Japanese, and Latin-American earthquakes.

All this giving was voluntary, not necessitated either

by the state or social pressure. It came from the mass donations of about 200 denominations, about half of which were native, and half of foreign origin. This large number of organizations had developed from the colonial base of twenty-eight religious bodies. Competition entered into the work of all these churches, both at home and abroad. Generosity was possibly increased by division into many bodies. It is conceivable that with one state church divided into grudging parishes, less might have been accomplished at home and abroad. If gifts set up the church at home, the habit of gifts extended to missions and to relief of distress abroad.

The churches had their own demarcation lines, but also over-stepped them in programs of common purpose. Lay efforts counted for much in America. Laymen not only shared in the administration of the churches but they brought their business energy to bear on religious affairs. The churches were pliable in shaping themselves to the institutions of the country, often using the bounds of a state as an administrative unit. Theology was secondary to meeting concrete human needs. A life of reflection without visible action counted less than in Europe. The phenomenon of wealth, and of making money, is matched only by the phenomenon

of giving it away. The aristocrat of Europe founded families. The American invested his money in his fellow men, in building churches, schools, libraries, hospitals, research and medical foundations. And he found it relatively easy to include the outside world in his gifts.

III.

A MEASURE OF PROGRESS

SIGNIFICANT is the role of the fourteen million Negro Americans who today, and throughout our history, have averaged more than one-tenth of our population.[47] It is a striking fact that in the century between 1815 and 1914 the European and American Protestant missionary effort in Asia and in Africa had made no more converts to Christianity than were made among the Negroes of the United States during the same period of time. Of all the people of non-European stock, the American Negroes gave to Christianity its greatest numerical gains in this period of time. Indeed, the cen-

[47] For numbers and percentages see Edwin R. Embree, *Brown Americans* (New York, 1943), p. 26. In 1790, the figure was 19.3%.

turies of Catholic efforts from the days of Columbus had given the Catholic in Asia and Africa only about 50% more converts than had been achieved by all the religious bodies in the United States in the Christianization of the Negroes.[48] Today the fourteen million Negroes are Christian.

This success is the clearest instance that can be found in American history for the magnificent work of the churches in Americanization. More definitely than with the European immigrant, Christianization of the Negro meant his Americanization, and the loss of his tribal world.[49] The Negro emerged from this process as the most completely non-hyphenated stock we have. His allegiance is wholly American. For decades, up to the American Civil War, much American public opinion, North as well as South, saw no other solution of the Negro problem than either slavery or deportation to Africa. It is the fact of his Christianization and Americanization that must be regarded as the reason why both these solutions were defeated and abandoned. The

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[48] Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of the Expansion of Christianity, The Great Century, A. D. 1800 to A. D. 1914,* Vol. IV, p. 327.

[49] See Frank J. Klingberg, *An Appraisal of the Negro in Colonial South Carolina, A Study in Americanization* (Washington, D. C., 1941), *passim.* The able missionary, Francis Le Jau, wrote frequently that the Negro adapted Christianity to his own needs; see especially pp. 16-20.

training in self-government of the Negro has been primarily in his churches. He has chosen the two churches in which self-government could be attained most readily, namely, the Baptists and the Methodists. Ninety-five percent of Negroes belong to these churches. While the numerical count of the Episcopal and Catholic Negro churches is smaller, these two bodies have devoted themselves unremittingly to this task for more than two centuries. They began early, and contributed much knowledge as to how to go about the task. Their experiences often revealed the best way of working.

Here is a startling example of how religion shaped and made our social institutions. Slavery was abolished, a whole system of Negro churches and schools has been established, and a whole race is largely integrated into the complete institutional life of the country.[50] That this integration has been achieved in good part by religion and the churches is a fact beyond dispute. Religion brought the Negro the beginnings of education, and was the main force in the attainment of his freedom. North and South the Negro had shown his capacity in indus-

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[50] It is important to remember that the Negro from colonial times was to be found not only in the South but throughout the country. Valuable for the story of the Negro in the North is Lorenzo Johnston Greene, *The Negro in Colonial New England, 1620-1776* (New York, 1942), *passim.*

trial and agricultural life. After Appomattox, the whole Negro race wanted to go to school. The one textbook to be found in cabins throughout the South was the Bible. The Northern Missionary Societies, the Freedmen's Bureau, and those who even during the war had been helpful in the education of the Negro were now in a position to open a bigger program. Hampton Institute was organized in April, 1868, by the American Missionary Association under General Samuel Chapman Armstrong. Men South as well as North supported the effort. It early became and has remained a prominent institution with literary as well as industrial and professional training, and has today an endowment of ten million dollars. Most Americans have read the account of it by its graduate, Booker T. Washington, in his autobiography, *Up From Slavery.*

In 1876 Fiske University was organized and is known to many Americans through its Fiske Jubilee Singers who, in their first tour, raised $40,000, mostly in New England. Howard University was financed originally by the Freedmen's Bureau, and has received aid from Congress with slight interruptions from the beginning to the present. Today the annual budget is one million dollars. Other colleges, as they were organized, were

the product of home missionary societies and public interest.

The Negroes themselves had a zeal for education which filled the schools of all sorts, and diffused the idea of education. The mission schools formed the initial corps and pioneered until public education was founded for black and white in a region where education had been largely private on the English pattern.

During the period of Reconstruction, the Southern poor whites, the Negroes, and northern carpetbaggers joined to outline a public school system for the states of the South but it was not till the turn of the century that this system could become effective. In the new system discrimination against the Negroes began in the form of giving them a lesser share of the school tax money, inferior buildings, and less well-trained teachers. Many northern foundations have made the improvement of Negro schools a major interest and millions have been spent to this end through the establishment of teachers' colleges, improvement of school buildings, and other measures forcing the legislatures to act or to contribute. The Negro's share of gifts has been phenomenal. Of $28,500,000 spent for school buildings, on the initiative of the Rosenwald Fund, the Negro's dimes,

quarters, and dollars totaled more than the $4,367,000 contributed by the Fund itself.[51] Eighteen millions came from the regular tax funds, and a million from interested whites. The whole cost of maintenance has been assumed by the southern people through their legislatures. Equality of educational opportunity for the Negro is a goal of Southern leaders. Only 10% of the Negroes in the country are now illiterate, whereas in 1865, 95% were illiterate. Then some Negroes were but recently arrived, and today the African-born Negro is practically unknown.

A century of progress may be graphically illustrated by mentioning the obstacles successfully overcome in one state, North Carolina. In 1835, after the Nat Turner insurrection in Virginia, North Carolina, the last Southern state to do so, passed severe measures against the education of Negroes, thus reversing the earlier trend of the eighteenth century and the first decades of the nineteenth favoring instruction of the Negroes. William Wilberforce across the Atlantic in pleading for complete emancipation in the 1820's had reluctantly come to the same conclusion as many of the Southern leaders that there was no half-way mark between

[51] Edwin R. Embree, *Brown Americans*, p. 96.

slavery and complete emancipation and that the most humane slavery held no illusory hopes.[52]

Now, a century later, North Carolina leads the nation in its provisions for Negro education. There are 2141 Negro public schools, of which 168 are high schools, five are state-supported colleges. The annual public expenditure runs to $7,000,000.[53] Notwithstanding some shortcomings, the management and expenditure more nearly approach equalization for whites and Negroes than elsewhere in the South.

Despite imperfections of theory and practice, in the United States the Negro is better off than in any other land where he dwells. He has greater educational opportunities, controls means of self-expression in his own newspapers, periodicals, and also shares in the output of the leading publishing houses. The flood of our self-criticism and our actual shortcomings sometimes give the impression that the Negro's economic and cultural

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[52] Frank J. Klingberg, *The Anti-Slavery Movement* (New Haven, 1926), pp. 197-200. George Canning, speaking for the British government in 1823 when the question of emancipation was brought up in Parliament, stated that the British constitution and the Christian religion were in their spirit unfavorable to slavery, but that neither the constitution nor Christianity prohibited slavery, and he assured the West Indians that their interests would not be sacrificed in righting a national wrong. This policy of protecting the vested interest of slavery was carried out in 1833, when £20,000,000 was granted the slave owners in compensation for their 800,000 slaves.

[53] Edwin R. Embree, *Brown Americans*, p. 54, note.

conditions are higher elsewhere, but this is not true.[54] Here his labor is in good part integrated both in agriculture and industry with that of the white community. His admission into more trade unions will be another step in his industrial progress.

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The American world is not and never was a mere duplication of European ideas, or of any European social order. Separatism rested on these four cornerstones: American society developed late in time and in a scientific age; it is the product of many nationalities; and of many religious faiths; and it is unified in a new pattern. Here equalitarianism is continental in scope and without the stamp of caste.

The founders of this country, Franklin and Jefferson for example, knew the European world so well that they used that knowledge to establish a new and unique American society. We have viewed Jefferson too much as president and political leader of his time and too little as the chief philosophical founder of the American

[54] For a brief account of the Negro in his homeland and all areas of the colonial world see Frank J. Klingberg, "The Rise of the Negro in Africa," in *Africa, the Near East, and the War* (Berkeley, California, 1943), pp. 51-81.

way of life.[55] Not an imitator or a mere importer, as the twentieth-century man too often is, his thought was based on the ancient writers, medieval thinkers, German critics, English radicals, and great French thinkers of modern times. But the chief features of his mind and character were originality and courage. Even the Reign of Terror did not shake him from the dynamic French heritage. Up to 1850 American political and social thinking derived freely from France, but Protestant religious ideas were drawn largely from the British Isles where continental ideas were often interpreted. Once the new freedom of the churches in a free state was established, membership grew the nation over. The churches helped shape this environment and were shaped by it. They were freed from political pressure or intervention by dis-establishment. This emancipation enabled each church to go its own way. If dissatisfied, men with new ideals organized new institutions, of which the Disciples of Christ, the Mormons, the Christian Scientists are well-known examples. After 1800, without permissive action from government or ecclesias-

[55] Adrienne Koch, *The Philosophy of Thomas Jefferson* (New York, 1943), Charles A. and Mary R. Beard, *The American Spirit* (New York, 1942), and Frank J. Klingberg, *The Morning of America* (New York, 1941), are three recent books surveying the origin and development of American culture and the growth of the American spirit.

tical authority, about one hundred new religious bodies were organized, supported by gifts, and have molded American Society.[56] Freedom of worship is a civil liberty of extreme potency because it deals with this world but draws its strength from the spiritual convictions of men.

Our history is constantly in process of discovery and should include in full proportion the contribution of the churches. This is primarily the responsibility of each individual church, through its archivists and societies. Knowledge of the part of churches in building our country would fortify our youth, particularly in the college years. Pride would be aroused in what every denomination has wrought. We have lost much knowledge of our heritage through the failure of our countrymen to explain to their children, and to recent refugees from intolerance, that in America the church has not been the enemy of civil liberties but their guardian. Prom-

[56] In a series of articles on "Why Are the Cults Growing?" Charles S. Braden has pointed to census figures which show that between 1926 and 1936, the so-called "regular" churches lost 2,000,000 members while such sects as Holiness and Pentecostal made phenomenal growth. He quotes Professor Anton Boisen's study of the Indiana town in which he was reared. The churches of Boisen's boyhood that ministered to the people "from the wrong side of the tracks," namely, Methodist, Baptist, and Disciples of Christ, had 40 years later become well-to-do middle class institutions alongside Presbyterian and Episcopal congregations, while "The Churches of the Dispossessed," were represented by Pentecostal, Nazarene, and Church of God churches. See *The Christian Century*, LXI (January 12, 19, 26, February 2, 1944), pp. 45-47, 78-80, 108-110, 137-140.

inent authors speak against Jefferson's "slogan" of religious freedom as if it were outmoded because not understood by some Europeans. The film, because of the limitations of its form, necessarily chooses the dramatic incident of violations of a tradition rather than the elusive elements of our heritage—the intangibles which are of slow growth.

Thus it has somehow come about that an almost miraculous ignorance as to the American way prevails even in the most friendly countries. Through our own knowledge of and insistence upon our inherited and indigenous culture, other nations will be stimulated to find our history enriching and a profitable subject of serious study. The building of the United States of America is the greatest fact of modern times. Our most original contribution is that of a free Church in a free State. A Supreme Court justice has summed up in historic words the practice and tradition that have kept us free from tyranny of the mind.[57] Said Mr. Justice Jackson: "If there is any fixed star in our constitutional constellation, it is that no official, high or petty, can prescribe what shall be orthodox in politics, nationalism,

[57] From Frank J. Klingberg, *Contributions of the S. P. G. to the American Way of Life,* Publication No. 14, The Church Historical Society (Philadelphia, 1943), p. 43.

religion, or other matters of opinion or force citizens to confess by word or act their faith therein."[58] This opinion re-interprets the "very purpose of a Bill of Rights" as that of a charter to withdraw from the "reach of majorities and officials" and beyond "the vicissitudes of political controversy," the basic rights of free speech, press, and freedom of worship.

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[58] West Virginia State Board of Education et al. *v.* Barnette et al., 319 U. S. 624, at 642. In his concurring opinion, Mr. Justice Murphy quoted (at 646) from Jefferson's Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom, that "all attempts to influence [the mind] by temporal punishments, or burdens, or by civil incapacitations, tend only to beget habits of hypocrisy and meanness," and concludes in his own words, "Official compulsion to affirm what is contrary to one's religious beliefs is the antithesis of freedom of worship which, it is well to recall, was achieved in this country only after what Jefferson characterized as the 'severest contests in which I have ever been engaged.'"

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